

THE
RESULT OF INQUIRIES
CONNECTED WITH
NERVOUS DISEASES,
LUNATIC ASYLUMS,
AND THE PRESUMED
ABUSES in the COURT of CHANCERY
RELATING THERETO.

BY A CAPTAIN OF THE ROYAL NAVY,
Knt. of the Imperial Order of Leopold.

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PREFACE.

It is true this subject is foreign to my professional pursuits, but the following pages will shew it was thrown across my path, and that I have been necessitated to take it up.——To have done so with enthusiasm was natural——and to publish the result of my inquiries is forced upon me as a tribute of filial respect to my parent's memory.

The facts concealed from a humane and broken-hearted father, and the consequent proceedings adopted of depriving my brothers of their rights, upon the grounds of Insanity,—the attempt made on his death, with the assistance of the lunatic house proprietors (in whose care the unfortunate men were), to perpetuate their continuance with those persons, and to deprive me also of my civil rights, as well as them of my protection (as their natural guardian), have called forth the following treatise, because it is of consequence for their relatives to be aware not only of their actual state, but also of other circumstances so often discussed and so imperfectly known regarding these most injured individuals.

As to——although I do not expect my present forbearance will be appreciated, until a retaliation is forced upon me, I hope it will appear I have as much as possible abstained from personal invective—that field is open to me in a future publication, dependant upon circumstances connected with further proceedings, and I am too painfully acquainted with the opposition of those who for so many years have acquiesced in my brothers' incarceration—as well as of others from whom I might have expected assistance, not to feel the expediency of submitting

the professional treatment recommended to me, to be pursued towards A—— B—— and L—— P—— to the criticism of public opinion: and in a form the most simple for the Master's consideration, that the continued attempt to falsify my intentions and conduct may be frustrated.

The subject however is of such an important nature, that I cannot but forget my own wrongs—in pleading for the 16 or 18,000 unhappy sufferers confined in lunatic asylums—many of whom must be victims to erroneous opinions relative to nervous diseases—and all requiring greater protection than is now afforded them—this conviction has induced me to emerge from a retirement more congenial to my own feelings, upon the chance that the attention of the legislature may be called to the subject—and even if it is not, I feel confident that in these islands, where a belief in hereditary insanity has such a distressing effect over many families, the views here elucidated may have a consoling and gratifying influence.

No one can peruse the proceedings in Chancery without the most painful interest—but the affectionate and uncommon kindness—and sympathy—I have experienced from my numerous connections and friends, especially in this island, and my neighbours in London, has cheered me on my course, supported me under my trials, and left an impression of gratitude which cannot easily be effaced.

R—— S——.

Claremont Terrace, Jersey.

CHAPTER I.

In time's swift flight through this uncertain scene,
What griefs o'ercloud, what sorrows intervene,
While swept by fate down Nature's changing tide,
Life's fondest hopes, its dearest wishes glide,
And fast receding from our anxious view,
Elude the grasp and fade as we pursue.

Ye friends of human kind ! whose bounties flow
To dry the tears of wretchedness and woe,
This is a cause that asks your warmest zeal
Where each must pity and where all must feel.

PHILOSOPHERS of every age who have made the human mind their study, and who set the highest estimate on human genius, have been struck with awe and wonder on beholding the frequent subversions of this the divine attribute of their species. To speculate, therefore, on the nature of the mind, and the morbid phenomena of intellectual derangement was a natural consequence ; and the effect has been to consider mental derangement not as a disease connected with the grosser or corporeal part of man, and within the province of medicine, but as a subject of abstract contemplation.

It would be to little purpose to recount here the strange opinions formed concerning the uses of the nervous system by the ancients ; but the superstitious horror of touching a dead body, and the fear as well as veneration with which maniacs were often surrounded, are facts from which reasons may be easily deduced : for the encouragement given to the fascinations of speculative philosophy ; hypotheses superseded induction ; “ the physician and metaphysician forgot that ‘ the proper study of mankind is man,’ and that he who aims at the most perfect knowledge of the human mind must study human nature not by scholastic rules, but by the realities of life.” In truth, that to acquire this knowledge, we must, as my late father in his admirable work on the principles of physiological and physical science most justly points out “ unlearn the errors of the crowd, and the pretended wisdom of the schools.

“ Until physiologists be made to feel that physiology is still an art not a science, and pathologists that the practice of medicine is altogether empirical, until the state of error and of ignorance which exists be truly and fairly represented, I see no hope whatever of improvement or of reformation.”

Again—“ It has been the object of my most particular solicitude to expose the errors of such pursuits, and to point out the evils to which they lead ; to show that such a system, instead of leading to truth, not only recedes from it, but perpetuates and establishes what is infinitely worse than ignorance, erroneous principles, that instead of exploring the *essential properties of matter* with relation to the system of order and subordination which exist throughout the whole system of nature, secondary qualities alone obtained by artificial means, are the objects of our present inquiries. Instead of contemplating the attributes of the Creator from the works of the creation, it is through the medium of unnatural phenomena alone that *natural phenomena* are attempted to be explained.

“ I complain that, instead of making man religious, the
 “ present system is at variance with religion, and deprives
 “ him of the benefit and of the comforts which religion
 “ is calculated to bestow. That, instead of leading
 “ man to God it estranges God from man, and separates
 “ to the utmost possible distance (if I may be
 “ allowed the expression) the soul from the Deity.”

Instead of studying the phenomena of corporeal disease and morbid action in the deranged, Practitioners and relatives have suffered their attention to be led away by the dogma, that the mind is a divine, governing and directing principle, *independent of Organic matter* ; consequently that all inquiry into that state of the patient should have reference *entirely* to the mental symptoms : and it is thus that the shadow only is seen, while the real feature of the disease eludes observation!!!!

William Hunter was the first who attacked this fallacious principle, and Mr. Chas. Bell's experiments as to the Organic action of the nerves, their connection with the brain, and his other valuable investigations have given the old system its death blow, for *la lumiere ne retrograde jamais*. And I believe I am correct in stating that though mental derangement being *always* a consequence of some previous bodily ailment is an opinion *only* partially received, and first practically acted upon within a very few years ; the success of such practice has, however, given a weight to that opinion, which is making a new era in the history of the treatment of nervous disorders : and it is to be hoped that the day is not far distant when the deranged, and especially what are called hereditary deranged, instead of being given over to lunatic asylums as “stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted,” and to remain there—unless a miracle procures their restoration—will soon have fair play, and if driven from their homes, will be placed in receptacles not merely for security, but also of cure, until they are called by our Almighty father, to “ where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest.”

Were not the subject too serious it would be amusing to observe how the faculty is giving up the hitherto received opinions on the origin of insanity. In an interesting little work now before me,* a physician thus controverts the opinion that the majority of nervous cases arises from hereditary insanity. “ I believe in a very great proportion of cases (where there is no organic derangement of any viscus essential to life) that the *primary* cause of the first symptoms of most invalids is a disturbed function of the brain ;” and he then proceeds to sum up the natural phenomena which occasion the disturbance of those functions.

Dr. Burrows in page 159 of his elaborate work on Insanity, from which as well as others, I make copious extracts, states, “ Recent experience has proved we are in the infancy of our knowledge of the treatment of the various forms and complications of insanity ; and we now see the happy issue of more enlightened and scientific views.”

The same author (the Proprietor of an Asylum) in the same page ADMITS, “ It is notorious that nothing is more alarming to the generality of lunatics than those sudden convulsions to which the epileptic are subject ; therefore, those simply maniacal, and those who have fits—by association—generally aggravate each others malady.”

Now is there an Asylum in England where a classification of epileptic and maniacal patients takes place, and where the one are entirely separated from the other ? As far as my inquiry goes I have found none, and Dr. Burrows (page 158) says, “ In all the English Asylums I have visited, the Epileptics were commingled with the lunatics to their mutual torment—and sometimes danger,—and I will aver to the certain impeding of their recovery ! ! !”

It is to be hoped that, if not the present, some suc-

* Manuel for Invalids.

ceeding Lord Chancellor will be induced for a moment, to relax his attention from abstract legal questions, and to issue directions, that all the maniacal sufferers, of whom he is the legal guardian, will be protected from being in houses where there are epileptic patients, especially with respect to females!!!

But why should deranged females be in any establishment, where there are male patients or male superintendants? Are we to expect better of the present or future Lord Chancellors than of the past? Or is it necessary to appeal to the Legislature for a remedy, which I almost hope is only to be made known to be attended to.

The Lord Chancellor has merely to issue to the Committees of Lunatics under his care, directions that female lunatics placed in Asylums, shall only be incarcerated in those where female patients and attendants are received—that in no case shall patients simply maniacal, be placed in Asylums where epileptic patients are received—and the remedy is at once effected.

Dr. Gateskill in his interesting little treatise upon lunacy, states in page 102. “ In all the cases without exception where the patient’s pecuniary circumstances are such as to admit a removal from home into private lodgings, and with proper attendants, this mode is preferable to even the best regulated Asylums, because the consciousness of being confined in a mad-house, uniformly produces an unhappy effect upon the mind of the unfortunate sufferer.”

Sherford, in his admirable work upon maniacal jurisprudence, boldly cuts the Gordian knot and declares, in page 73, “ It is now known that insanity is as curable as any disease to which mankind are subject; that it arises from deranged bodily functions—not mental affections—and that by kindness and proper medicine, there is often less difficulty in removing this

“malady than many others, of which juster notions have
“long been entertained by the faculty.”

Dr. Walsham, Dr. Powel, Dr. Vassal, and many of the amiable medical men with whom my talented parent was familiar, held similar opinions, but none more so than one of the noblest philanthropists of his day, and who for years was the father of his profession. I allude to Sir William Blizzard, and having mentioned his name I feel I write an Epitaph: the wicked only require an enumeration of sounding virtues, those of the good outlive even their actions. To me he was kind, passing kind: he sympathized with my grief, bore with my agonizing feelings, and bid me look to hope, and rely upon the assistance of Providence.

CHAPTER II.

DoGB.—Masters do you serve God ?

CON. BORA.—Yea Sir, we hope.

DoGB.—Write down—that they hope they serve God :—and write God first; for God defend but God should go before such villains !—Masters, it is proved already that you are little better than false knaves; and it will go near to be thought so shortly. How answer you for yourselves ?

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

When a disease is beyond the capacity or inclination, and contrary to the interest of the physician and relatives, nothing is more congenial to both, than to declare the patient's complaint a visitation of divine Providence. The one takes his fee, the other the fee-simple of the Invalid's estate ; and need we look back to the period of the darker ages for the occurrence of such events ?

The following is an extract from the NEW MONTHLY MAGAZINE of a recent date—

“ One of those stories of secret and pertinacious cruelty,
“ which occasionally transpire to the horror of the world,
“ and which it is to be feared, exist in more instances
“ than the world suspect, has appeared, with the names
“ and abode of the parties, in the Birmingham Journal.

“ It is of two brothers and a sister, all unmarried,
 “ who confined their elder brother a lunatic for fifteen
 “ years in a garret. The situation in which he was
 “ found, neglected and reduced to a condition far worse
 “ than that of a beast in a den, may be better con-
 “ ceived than described.

“ Prior to his incarceration he is said to have been
 “ able to drive the cattle, go on errands, and give a
 “ rational answer to a plain question. At the time when
 “ he was discovered, he was a brute creature, bearded
 “ and clawed, and he shrieked at the light of day.”

The story of the Countess of C.... (confined for many years by her husband), the most popular of the productions of Madame de Genlis, was founded on fact; and I have been informed of a case of a similar nature with which it is to be hoped the public will not be long in ignorance.

Is there any person who looks over this little pamphlet, but must feel such an event is, in these our times, one of every day occurrence?

Further Dr. Burrows writes with reference to Lunatic Asylums in the following words :—“ It is abundantly proved
 “ by the evidence before the Committees of the two
 “ houses of Parliament, that the wretched outcasts of hu-
 “ manity have, in many instances been too hastily con-
 “ signed to neglect and oblivion, in those dreadful recep-
 “ tacles of frail mortality, which it is to be lamented are
 “ not merely prisons (but some of them worse than pri-
 “ sons) and generally places for the security and safe
 “ custody of patients, rather than as hospitals for the
 “ treatment of deranged faculties.”

Lest I should be accused of exaggeration (before we look into the internal management of these dens) let the reader consider the following extract from the writings of Drs. Pinel and Gateskill.

Dr. Pinel writes thus, page 52, “I was engaged to
 “ attend in a professional capacity, at an Asylum where
 “ I made observations upon this disease for five succes-
 “ sive years. My opportunities for the application of
 “ moral remedies were, however, not numerous. The
 “ person who was at the head of the establishment had
 “ no interest in the cure of his wealthy patients, and
 “ he often unequivocally betrayed a desire that every
 “ remedy should fail.”

Dr. Pinel, page 4, says “ The Managers of Asylums,
 “ who are frequently men of little knowledge, and less
 “ humanity, have been permitted to exercise towards their
 “ innocent prisoners a most arbitrary system of cruelty,
 “ and violence, while experience affords ample and daily
 “ proofs of the happier effects of a mild, conciliatory
 “ treatment, rendered effective by steady, dispassionate
 “ firmness.”

Dr. Gateskill, page 97, says, “ Lunatic Asylums of
 “ every description, and especially private ones, ought to
 “ be placed under very strict police superintendence.
 “ Certainly it is the interest of the patient to be cured
 “ as speedily as possible, whilst it is evidently the inte-
 “ rest of the proprietors to retain their patients, espe-
 “ cially their wealthy ones, during the remainder of their
 “ days, in which sinister purpose they are very frequently
 “ seconded by other interested parties.” ! ! ! ! !

And now, gentle reader, I dare not altogether develope
 to you the crimes to my knowledge committed in those
 establishments. I make use of the first person, because I
 can safely say—

Talia fando quæ vidi et quorum pars magna fui ;

for while endeavouring to palliate the advice given to
 a broken hearted parent, which induced him reluctantly
 to retain his unhappy sons in Lunatic Asylums, I visited
 others—sat down at the maniac’s table, examined keepers—
 dived into the routine of treatment—looked at the quan-

tum of comforts within the patient's reach, and the extent of protection they experienced—and returned from the search so overwhelmed with terror and horror, that if it had not been that under every trial we should bear in mind the sentiments so beautifully described by Akenside—

Say—why was man so eminently rais'd
Amid the vast creation; why ordain'd
Through life and death to dart his piercing eye,
With thoughts beyond the limit of his frame;
But that the Omnipotent might send him forth
In sight of Mortal and Immortal powers,
As on a boundless theatre, to run
The great career of justice ;—to exalt
His generous aim to all diviner deeds ;
To chase each partial purpose from his breast ;
And through the mists of passion and of sense,
And through the tossing tide of chance and pain,
To hold his course unflinching, while the voice
Of truth and virtue, up the steep ascent
Of nature calls him to his high reward,—
The applauding smile of heaven.

If it had not been for a conviction of this nature, which dared me to stop, and forced me to proceed, I would most likely have broken down under the consequences of my rashness, in visiting these horrors, and been “ like a man haunted by a dream and wondering under its influence ; or as one whom a spectre pursues, and for whose eye the breathing and busy world is but as a land of unreal forms and flitting shadows ; teeming with the monsters of darkness and the terrors of eternal condemnation.”

It is useless to demonstrate how entirely the female community in Asylums are liable to the controul of the *male superintendents* and keepers. Now, since force is not necessary beyond what may easily be obtained from their own sex, why allow any establishment to exist which receives both male and female patients, or employs male superintendents connected with the care of female invalids.

Among the first I visited was one where the relatives of each inmate, I understood, paid from two to four hundred

a year. It belonged to an eminent physician, and is alluded to for its excellent arrangement in the Report of the Committee of the House of Commons. Upon being shown into the visiting room where I was told the less violent of the inmates were permitted to enter, the first books I opened on the table were *Sherlock upon Death*, and *Young's Night Thoughts*!—Lively subjects for the contemplation of a mind diseased! After going through the corridor, I inquired of my conductor if he had the key of the room in which I saw an interesting female locked up; he told me he had; and by this, I of course concluded, as will the reader, that he had the power of communicating with her. I inquired, how often the physician visited his asylum—I did more, I ascertained that he only went to his establishment twice a week (unless especially sent for) when he remained about two or three hours. In his absence the housekeeper managed the establishment, having keepers and several servants under her; and upon whose reports the physician's opinion of the state of the patients in his absence was founded; for the physician informed me he did not himself treat the surgical cases, and that it was a month since he had seen the patient I inquired after, who I was informed was much the same. I went into another room about fourteen feet square: here was that individual locked up without any earthly source of amusement whatever. I was told he was a violent patient, and only allowed to walk in the yard below at stated intervals during the day, and this was dependant entirely upon the will of the keepers, and housekeeper.

At another period, upon inquiring at another asylum why a patient I visited was not shaved, I was told, it was the rule of the house, only to shave the inmates twice a week. At another time I found the garden in the middle of the day entirely empty; and as there were upwards of forty patients, I asked the reason. It appeared even that in these wretched abodes, surrounded by high walls, those unhappy beings were only allowed to move from their inhospitable rooms at stated intervals; and this is gene-

rally the case in all lunatic asylums, for the keepers are not sufficiently numerous to admit of relieving each other.

If it happens that temporary assistance of keepers is wanted elsewhere (so as not to leave an adequate number in the house) a portion, if not the whole of the patients are liable to be locked up until their return. This I believe is a very common occurrence near London, where keepers are often suddenly wanted, and where the payment for such temporary services are exorbitant.

In some houses there are classifications of patients, and I have seen them taking their exercise in separate gangs with keepers over them.

Now "I would ask" are these uneducated men persons of a character to judge where to tighten or where to relax the restraint of an invalid, or to direct the walks and recreations of well educated men who on some particular points only have shown derangement of mind? And are the whole class of keepers fitted for the care of any but the idiot and the madman?

On another occasion, I witnessed the whole inmates being driven in like a flock of sheep, because a stranger was to go over the grounds!

I was informed that the majority of them are habituated to talk to themselves, and allude with the greatest correctness, to the events of their past lives. In this we see the natural workings of an ardent and disappointed heart, which as the future seems to darken upon it, clings with fondness to the recollections of the past; and in despair of finding new and true friends, sees no happiness, but in preserving all it can of the old. How often has their sensibility had to encounter a repetition of those freezing checks to which feelings above the ordinary temperature of the world are but too constantly

exposed ! How often in a solitary moment must they indignantly exclaim, “ I am now alive and perhaps tomorrow in the grave, and I do not believe I shall leave behind me, this keeper excepted, a single human being who will care what has become of me ! ”

In some establishments I found the inmates indiscriminately fed with SPOON MEAT, none being allowed the use of a knife and fork. This is a consequence of the absence of classification, and a humane heart must bleed for those unhappy wretches, who, although labouring under occasionally diseased intellects, have long lucid intervals, and can appreciate the comforts they have lost. This must occur in all cases of monomania. Among paupers these privations are less felt, because a great portion of their diseases arises from the want of food ; but with the well educated it is not so. What excited feelings the better class of persons here alluded to must labour under, at having for years chopped food served up to them, upon the absurd idea that they at any time might do themselves injury !!! for of the various characters of mental derangement in those labouring under this complaint, the inclination to injure themselves or others appears only in a very few, and then in so striking a manner as to be easily detected.

Another I found had his arm dislocated : I was told it occurred in a scuffle with the keeper when he had a straight waistcoat on, the effects of which he feels to this day. This I was astonished to find, is an event of no uncommon occurrence.

At one of these houses I suddenly came upon the family at the period of tea, and found it so strong as to be totally unfit for nervous complaints !!!

At another time, I went where I found eleven of these wretched sufferers in a hot room with a fire so large as rendered it to me quite insupportable. Here I was told, as is always the assertion in Lunatic Asylums, that every

source of amusement is within the reach of the inmates. I called for cards—there where none : then for the Chess board, the pieces of which were imperfect, nor were they twelvemonths afterwards completed, though promised to be so.

All this, is as nothing, when compared with the neglect of those patients who require continual change of linen, and where the linen is only changed at fixed periods. Let me entreat the authorities not merely of this Island but those having influence over Asylums to rectify this abuse where it exists.

In some cases, I found the surgical attendance almost nominal. At one house, Sir W. Blizzard found a lunatic treated for one disease when labouring under another, owing to his being attended by a druggist. This, however, is illegal and the proprietor was liable to be fined ; but I am persuaded it is not an uncommon occurrence for “SUPERINTENDENTS” NOT ONLY TO BLEED, BUT TO ADMINISTER MEDICINE WITHOUT MEDICAL ADVICE !

At another Asylum a young lady (for whom I had a lively interest) was bled freely, and died six months afterwards of dropsy : and while many an inhabitant of this island, may be horror struck at the reflections which must arise from these observations, let me earnestly entreat them, to consider the total absence of accommodation in this island for poor deranged persons, especially in the town hospital. A few humane and kind hearted ladies, supported by the wife of our esteemed Lieutenant-Governor, have for some months been endeavouring to reform that Augean Stable. Much has been done, though much more must be done to purify it : but their attempts can only partially succeed unless actively supported by the Bailiff and the States. After all, is it common humanity to make of an hospital a lunatic asylum, unless a separate wing is given for that purpose, or in that hospital not to make the most liberal provision for the insane patients. I conjure

those whose duty it is, to consider this in christian kindness, and to be assured that I attack systems, not individuals.

In the former chapter, I have treated the objections of medical men to lunatic asylums : I here state my own ; withholding many circumstances of a nature too disgusting to publish. I should observe that in lunatic asylums, I believe in general, the food to be good, and wholesome, because the proprietors have a deep interest in the lives of their inmates : but beyond this I can say nothing to their advantage from my own experience.

CHAPTER III.

I was ruined by a joke, somebody called me madman in jest, the rest of the world joined in the cry, though it was a fool who gave the tongue, and at last they ran me down, proved, to their own satisfaction, that I was out of my wits for being in a passion with, and turning upon those, who were hunting me.

Nothing is more easy than to prove a man mad; begin by throwing a slur upon his mental sanity, watch him narrowly; view all he does with a jaundiced eye: rake up a score of facts which occurred a year apart; facts that are really frolics, freaks, whims, vagaries, or what you will of the like nature; place them altogether, and the business is done, you make as fine a picture of Lunacy as a man would wish to look at.—ANONYMOUS.

Society would not for a moment tolerate such an ulcer as Lunatic Asylums, did not cupidity and superstition cloak the crime, by calling the complaint of the inmates, hereditary insanity; and thus, the fears of the community, not only in England, but especially of these Islands, are worked upon to tolerate it. The supposed disease is, therefore, the bugbear which reconciles the nation to this crying disgrace: because, nothing short of a disease imagined to be coeval with the birth of the patient,

could induce a belief of its being incurable, or reconcile the conscience to shutting up individuals among idiots, epileptic patients and confirmed Maniacs. With this view of the case, it is natural that I should preface further observations, with some remarks upon the general, but misconceived opinion, of the existence of such a disease, as *hereditary insanity*,—an opinion too often assented to by interested individuals, but which is in fact, founded upon a theory most improperly assumed. We have seen that Dr. Burrows in common with others, acknowledges the ignorance of professional men upon this subject of Insanity, and when facts do not bear out their theory, in order to reconcile the one with the other, the most absurd conclusions have been broached. Dr. Burrows says, “some have imagined that Insanity moves per saltem; and appears in every other, or every third individual in lineal descent. And that the development of insanity may escape one generation and appear in another, but no rule in this respect obtains.”

Now what does all this amount to, but that there is a predisposition in human nature, to be liable to mental derangement, if brought in contact with some circumstances the effects of which produce derangement.

Dr. Burrows at page 105 writes “One type *only* of mental derangement can be said to propagate itself: the propensity to suicide often preserves a marked singleness of character, through successive generations, and large families.”

Dr. H—ll—n at page 35 gives us great hopes, that as the world advances in years, this hereditary disease may die away, for he says “the nature of the diseases of insanity has materially differed within the last four years.” Now if the causes of insanity *vary* in one case, why may we not hope that they will in this!!

The facts are that errors must have an end,—and the day is fast approaching, when this complaint will be

treated as rationally as any other. Stripes and Manacles have within these last few years become almost exploded, and would to God we were not in our infancy with respect to the brutality exercised in the treatment of these assumed inherent diseases ! !

It is by tracing the features of the disease in persons labouring under them, from the stages of excitement, to that which caused this excitement ; from the diseased state, to the causes of its being so ; that any data can be arrived at, to draw just conclusions ; and among those respectable practitioners, who have studied the complaint upon these principles, hereditary insanity is altogether a misnomer. It is true, some families display a predisposition to mental derangement more than others, but it is difficult to substantiate in what human being that predisposition does not exist.

Individuals in whose families no such a case can be traced, have become insane.—Shipwrecked people who have never before shown symptoms of insanity, are known from the effects of hunger and thirst upon their constitutions, to have become insane. Others from solitary confinement have lost their intellects. Sir Samuel Romilly and Admiral Sir George Campbell, two of the most amiable men of their day, and surrounded by every personal comfort, unalloyed by pecuniary embarrassments, and enjoying the good opinion of all men, destroyed themselves when labouring under temporary organic disease, and further data prove, that except in cases of madness, and idiotism, arising from defective organisation, if hereditary insanity exists, it is inherent in the human frame, and all mankind have this predisposition, some, certainly more than others ; especially in those where a repetition of intermarriages takes place—but predisposition is not insanity, and is in itself harmless.—Predisposition is a dormant power,—it resembles the elasticity of a spring while it is coiled up—it is like the figures engraven upon a seal before they are participated by the wax :—it is like wood before it is ignited.—Wood possesses the

power to be ignited,—the seal to impress, the figure and the spring to re-act: these attributes, which those different bodies possess, would never be displayed, unless they were placed in a medium, and under circumstances, fitted for the nature of each. It is of the greatest importance therefore to bear this in mind; because while the hypothesis of hereditary insanity, is allowed to scare the sufferer's family, and influence the practitioner or upright guardian, the chance of a proper course of professional treatment must be very precarious.

The consequences of the prevalence in this belief have been, that some of our most distinguished characters have narrowly escaped being for life immured in lunatic asylums upon the predisposition being temporarily acted upon, and would thus have been for ever lost, to the happiness of those social enjoyments, in which every man naturally desires to participate. In all cases where the predisposition is worked upon by its exciting cause, symptoms of mental derangement *must* appear;—a legal power is then in the patient's family, to call for the certificate of two physicians, who of course can honestly declare its existence.—And upon this authority the patient can be thrown into a lunatic asylum, where God help him if he falls into interested hands, for he is beyond the help of man. The derangement has not previously been allowed to subside, and among all the excitements in a lunatic asylum, nothing is more simple than to make this an *apparent* permanent disease. It is upon no better authority and investigation than this, that upwards of **SIXTEEN THOUSAND PERSONS** are now confined in lunatic asylums.

So callous does the human mind get, on too frequently associating with deranged individuals, that a medical gentleman of naturally kind disposition, once argued with me, upon the advantages a lunatic possessed, when surrounded with every animal comfort, over a sane man, who having the exercise of mind, might use the power to his own unhappiness!

When a man of humane feelings, from association with lunatics, becomes so callous, what generous considerations are to be expected, from the class of men who are keepers and attendants !!!

I hope I have shown the fallacy of the theory of hereditary insanity, which conveys the idea of an incurable disorder ; while hereditary predisposition may mean something, as I have before stated, very harmless ;—and the effects of which can scarcely be regarded as incurable.—Alas, that this is not more generally understood ; in that case all lunatic asylums would be obliged to be places, not merely for security, but for cure, and an afflicted brother, would have escaped being for ten years incarcerated in one of those places, where many a victim is offered, to the shrine of cupidity and delusion. There is a possibility that it, and some others, may be carried on with a humanity which is highly honourable to the proprietors, but can these gentlemen say, they believe the generality of them are without shameful and scandalous abuses.

That some persons have a greater predisposition to excitement than others,—that an excess of this excitement produces disease, or derangement of the faculties—and further—that this predisposition appears to be stronger in the descendants of families, which have been too closely intermarried with each other, than in those where such relationship has not existed is acknowledged ; but it may be shewn by examining the history of the cases of the inmates of Lunatic Asylums, that this predisposition is less hereditary than it is supposed to be ; and that it frequently arises from children being exposed at home, or at school, to a harshness, or a mildness of treatment which their constitutions are incapable of experiencing without injury to the nervous system. And many a child has been kept by the effect of a parent's over anxiety, in a *state of constant irritation*, which has finally produced a morbid feeling bordering upon insanity. It is singular however that with the means within our reach, how very ignorant we are of data, upon these points.

As far as my inquiries go I find a plurality of cases are from persons who have been educated at public schools, where flogging and fagging are too often carried to an excess; and where many, from the bad example of a few, have fatally sought to anticipate the purposes of nature; and consequently have lapsed into a state, which brings with it impotency, weakened capabilities, and nervousness of temper; followed by mental derangement.

Another source of predisposition, is the over-exerting the youthful mind, of which there are so many examples from our universities; and the effects of which, are evident in the sickly appearance of many of our Clergy—in several instances, though of naturally mild, and placid dispositions, they become morose, or violent, or mad, as it were with passion, if meeting with the causes liable to act upon the predispositions engrafted in early life upon their constitutions. But whether the predisposition of A. B. is hereditary or arising from any of the causes I have detailed; it is only predisposition after all, and the effect of its being brought into action with its exciting cause has been mental derangement. Surely this is not to be regarded as incurable; surely this is not to be regarded as a hopeless case, and in consideration of it, it is necessary to analyse the symptoms, and to separate the causes from their approximating predisposition. I am not however satisfied that predisposition may not be acquired in after life.

I apprehend predisposition must be formed before derangement is nurtured—for in similar diseases, insanity appears in one person and not in another,—and I have imagined insanity of a compound nature, arising from derangement in the system, and causes acting upon it. Although it frequently happens that mental derangement may remain after the bodily ailment is apparently removed; but if it does remain, it evidently shortens life, or the Insurance Offices would be less obstinate in refusing to effect policies on the lives of lunatics,—and less anxious to purchase those already affected.

Perhaps it may be as well for me here to submit to the inexperienced reader, my views of the different grades connected with this disorder,—they do not originate from myself but from the pen of one, who I think it will appear has handled the subject with no less talent than correctness.

ON NERVOUS DISORDERS.

There is a great difference between madness and lunacy, and the nervous diseases, the effect of which is often confounded with it.

Madness, is a consequence of the malformation of the brain, and the patient is by no means of necessity attended with ill health.

Insanity itself properly means nothing but unhealthiness or unsoundness.

Derangement explains itself, and may surely mean very harmless things.

Lunacy (and the nervous disorders, under which head they are included) is in the most aggravated state, nothing but a disease of the bodily system.

The mind no doubt will act upon that state, and exasperate it; but there is great reaction between mind and body, and though it is a common thing for nervous people to do the most extravagant things,—it is as common for them to get well, and be quite themselves again under proper treatment.

Lunacy further relates to effects real or imaginary of particular states of the moon, which if any thing at all are nothing more than what every delicate constitution feels in its degree from particular states of the weather. Some people think no disorder can properly be held to be a true christian sickness, and fit for charitable inter-

pretation, unless the patient has regularly gone to bed, and had nurses about him.

But this state of things implies muscular weakness, or weakness of that sort which renders the bodily action feeble.

Now in *nervous diseases* the muscular action may be as strong as ever, and people may be very unwell though they are walking about.

Of the beneficial effects of mild and humane treatment in this disorder Mr. Haslem says "Speaking of the effect of management on an extensive scale, I can hereby declare by gentleness of manner and kindness of treatment, I have seldom failed to obtain the confidence and conciliate the esteem of insane persons; and have succeeded by these means, in procuring from them respect and obedience—there are certainly some patients who are not to be trusted, and in whom malevolence forms the prominent feature of their character, *such persons* should always be kept under a *certain* restraint—but this is not incompatible with kindness and humanity."

With reference to the cases in which I am deeply interested, the medical gentlemen I have consulted consider the professional treatment of such should be "early
 " rising, mechanical regularity in diet, occupation, and
 " exercise, cheerful society, conversation, amusements, and
 " a kind, a patient, and a gradual helping of the
 " bodily health till the mind is capable of proceeding
 " from amusement to occupation. To do every
 " thing which may please the mind; to make the invalid
 " feel as much as possible, that his property is restored
 " to him by being surrounded with his own, *providing*
 " *him with horse and carriage exercise*; enabling him
 " to visit the numberless places of public amusement gradually, and under the friendly advice of medical men;
 " so that amusement, study and occupation will be combined.—To divert the mind from those thoughts which

“tend to excite him—by creating other ideas—to have a
 “friend occasionally to dine with him, earnest attention
 “to regularity in religious exercises, especially where they
 “have been habitual ; and the aid of a companion, of
 “education and pleasing manners, to prevent the tendency
 “of the mind to think upon its real or imaginary inju-
 “ries.”—These are the cures and the almost infallible cures of
 nervous diseases : the very associations of a town soften
 the heart, for it is found that even animals, after being
 domiciled in towns, lose much of their ferocity, and al-
 though London is certainly not the town I would, in the
 generality of cases, suppose the best to be selected ; yet
 when derangement does not exist to the extent of the
 impossibility of preventing the patient being troublesome
 to a community, experience is decidedly in favor of his
 treatment being as much as possible in, or adjoining a
 town ; unless adequate occupation to divert the mind
 suitable to its bent, may be found in a country residence.
 Occasional change of abode is, I am told, desirable in
 the treatment of most nervous cases ; but so long as one
 relative enjoys a liberty which the other does not possess,
 it is liable to cause a jealous feeling in nervous people,
 and, therefore, it is not desirable, generally, that they
 should be domiciled for a continuance with their relatives ;
 although in no case is it on account of the patient, objec-
 tionable, where it does not produce excitement ; and it
 will not in those, who, sensible of their infirmities, are
 aware how much they require protection and assistance.
 I can bear testimony to the truth of this opinion, having
 witnessed a kind parent in vain endeavour to make his
 home suitable to his afflicted son, and having by domi-
 ciling an invalid friend in my own house, reconciled her
 to reside with pleasure the greater part of the year with
 her own relations. These periodical *visits* to her home
 became longer and longer, and those who wish to judge
 for themselves by personal experience, will be amply
 remunerated by the conviction of the happiness they
 thus afford to the afflicted.

In our climate, intellectual discipline and exertion are

ally occupying his mind, I assure you he exhibited nothing that would have drawn from a common observer the remark even of peculiarity ; and every one to whom he was introduced regretted only, that he should be so deaf as to preclude much conversation. Of course we went to see the Cathedral and all the lions of the Town and neighbourhood ; on the subject of which he conversed most rationally. Some Ladies always formed a part of our number to whom he was invariably polite and attentive. He bore the journey 132 miles remarkably well, and the change again of scene and circumstances in town seems to have kept up the healthy occupation of his mind——

T———— S————

CHAPTER VI.

I know not indeed a more beautiful spectacle in the world, than an old man who has gone with honor, through all its storms, and contests;—and who retains to the last the freshness of feeling which adorned his youth. *This is the true green old age—this makes a southern winter of declining years, in which the sun-light warms, though the heats are gone. Such are ever welcome to the young, and sympathy unites while wisdom guides.* There is this distinction between respect and veneration—the latter has always in it something of love.

BULWER.

Such was the career of my late excellent, great and good uncle, L—d D— S——.

Far from allowing his judgment, or the better feelings of his noble heart to be warped by the slanderer's tongue, or by garbled repetitions of former conversations, (emanating too often from interested individuals) he, at once acted with that dignity of conduct, and promptness of decision, which so eminently distinguished the manly, straightforward and christian course of his public and private life. In him were united justice, feeling, and benevolence,—and well knowing there is a time when silence becomes assent, he voluntarily made an affidavit the most flattering to his nephew's public and private character, upon indignantly perusing an alledged “statement of

facts" (and from one of his own relations) the tendency of which was, to prevent the brother of these afflicted young men being even *One* of a committee to watch over their interests, for more, that brother had neither proposed nor desired until he could by experience better judge of the nature and extent of that responsibility.

Such were also the latter days of two other highly-gifted and good men (now gone to their rest). Sir William Blizzard and Dr. Walshman, who with the worthy Bailiff of Guernsey and other honorable individuals, were the supports, by whose assistance an opposition was overcome in the Court of Chancery, against which few have succeeded without total loss of income.

It is curious to observe by what slow degrees, and after how many struggles and difficulties, every public and private grievance is redressed in this country. Carelessness and indifference about the object proposed to be gained, jealousy of the person making the attempt, suspicion or misrepresentation of his motives, a blind and overweening confidence in whatever is, because it is,—must be admitted to be formidable obstacles in the way of the most temperate reforms. Nor do I here allude merely to the selfish and interested opposition of those who derive benefit from existing abuses, and whose resistance (in itself by no means trivial or unimportant) must, therefore, be calculated upon as of course. These remarks are meant to be extended much further. It is to be presumed there is at all times—there certainly is in the present—a class of sleek and satisfied persons, who, provided their own affairs go on well, care little about any thing else; and who estimating the value of all institutions by their supposed good effect upon themselves, feel every project of alteration or amendment as, in some sort, an attack upon a system with which they fondly imagine their own prosperity is bound up; for how else could the Court of Chancery (the whole proceedings in which are so many systems of public spoliation) find not only existence but patrons. Is it not to be lamented that any statement

should be received in any court of equity not founded upon oath and that the English Court of Chancery should be the only remnant of a system now happily exploded in Europe in which the Anti-Saxon law finds refuge? for in the Court of Chancery (as in the courts of the inquisition, now exploded from the old world and execrated in the new) accusation travels one road, defence another. Thus it is that a state of facts (usually referred to the master) are accusations artfully drawn up by irresponsible persons, upon assumed, sometimes upon quite hypothetical data:—which it is cast upon the party who is responsible, not only to deny upon oath,—but also to elucidate,—although they may have reference to events which (as in my case), had happened six years previously. The assumed right to interfere in the domestic transactions of any subject in the realm—to canvass the merits of private life—to tear a brother from the protection of his nearest relative—and virtually to consign him to strangers who can have no personal interest, in his welfare,* is a power too inquisitorial and unnatural when delegated to one man and which it is to be hoped will soon rouse the jealousy of a more liberal legislature—in my case it has been stretched to the utmost extent of former precedents and to have further resisted would have involved my family in one common ruin.

On the necessary appointment of a new Committee to the two individuals who are the subjects of the preceding pages, “a state of facts” was laid before the master in which the most impudent falsehoods were brought forward by a relative,—and the belief in them sworn to by the solicitor employed—(which he did with great safety as it did not subject him to any responsibility for the falsehoods therein contained).—Finding from the circumstance of my having resided some hundred of miles from his employers at the periods alluded to—and with whom I, in common with other relatives, for a long

* The son of my late father's Agent and that individual's Solicitor are appointed with myself their Committee.

series of years had held no communication whatever, that they consequently could not give adequate information, he proceeded to the lunatic house proprietors who, in an hour's conversation I had had some months before, were aware of my intentions of having a course of medical treatment pursued by themselves or other medical men in which any personal restraint, (if at all,) was only to be a means of which the restoration to liberty of A— B— and L—— P—— should be the end.

From these gentlemen he elucidated as much of the conversation as they could recollect—and I would appeal to any impartial individual whether their statements do not contain internal evidence that the communications alluded to (even in the garbled form there dressed up) could have been made otherwise than under the seal of professional communication to men *whom I had never seen before* but who were conducting the course of my brother's medical treatment.

Upon this data, two affidavits, worded in the best manner to serve his end, were composed and contained the solemn declaration that in the brief interview of an hour only, they according to their affidavits, detected my own “eccentric manners,” confused feelings, “rambling observations,” “unsettled notions,” to an extent that it would be highly improper for me “to interfere with the management of any lunatic whatsoever.” Their affidavits and those of the other lunatic house proprietor (now dead) occasioned the Master *to require me to be examined* by Dr. Southerland as these affidavits contained evidence of mental aberration, and if that justly distinguished professional gentleman had not acted in the honorable manner he has done in the accompanying declaration* there is no

* This deponent hath attentively read such affidavits and considered the circumstances thereby referred to, and at an interview had by this deponent with the said R—— S—— and well weighed in his mind the various circumstances alluded to in the said affidavits, which was fully gone into and discussed at this interview, and by the latter, satisfactorily explained, this deponent is able to state, and doth hereby declare, that he could not trace the slightest inaccuracy in his replies to the questions put to him, or the remotest desire to screen any facts relating to those circumstances ; but that

doubt the difficulty and expense in removing the effects of these affidavits would have ruined the property of my afflicted brothers, and deprived me of my birth right as their legal and natural guardian.

I am earnestly recommended to adduce another affidavit, *among five others* of a similar nature, as it is evident the reader could know nothing of the writer except by his being acquainted with the nature of *them*. *

Had more affidavits from Medical Men been necessary they could have been obtained, having sought their opinions on the subject of this disease from an early period of my life, several therefore had an opportunity of judging of my sentiments, and it was fortunate for me that I happened to be acquainted with so many of the profession, for when I declared to a part of the Lunatic's family and the Proprietors of the Lunatic house-keepers, my doubts of the necessity of my brother being confined in Lunatic Asylums, (and the result has abundantly proved the truth of my belief) they nearly succeeded in establishing my own legal madness for thinking so, and thus deprived me of my civil rights. It was then in the face of opposing affidavits among which was one from a relative declaring "that A—— B—— is a violent, in-

his explanations and details were given in a straightforward manly, and becoming manner, devoid of all that assumption, and self conceit which this deponent had reason to believe he was to encounter, from the circumstances stated in the said affidavits.

(Signed)

SOUTHERLAND.

* This deponent further says that he hath from his infancy been well and intimately acquainted with the said R—— S—— that he knows him to be an honorable, humane, and generous person, and affectionately anxious for his brothers welfare, and believes him to be in all respects well calculated to be the Committee of the person, and estate of the said Lunatic, and in the judgment, and opinion of this deponent the comfort, and proper treatment of the said Lunatic, will be secured by the appointment of the said R—— S—— to be such Committee. And this deponent further saith that he is the better able to depose to the facts above stated, because this deponent has been repeatedly consulted by the said R—— S—— on the proper Medical treatment which ought to be adopted with reference to this case, and on all such occasions the said R—— S—— displayed great feeling and judgment, and great anxiety that the mode of treatment to be adopted, should be in accordance with the opinions of professional men of the first eminence.

curable, and dangerous lunatic," and in opposition to that of Mr. F——, who stated also, that during the nine years he had had A—— B—— under his care, A—— B—— had not enjoyed a lucid interval, that this brother, after two previous interviews of medical men, accompanied me in an open chaise from L——k House to Southampton, and from thence to the residence of the private family already referred to. He is now in London, and in six months after his arrival went, not only with me, but also with Mr. W——, to attend lectures at his own request. He is now, and has been for months, walking about London alone, and has had no restraint whatever over him, nor was there a keeper in the house from the first two months after his release. * This keeper in the first instance was placed about him as a precaution, but was not of any other utility. And how many unhappy beings there are at this moment confined in Lunatic Asylums by interested relatives, and less interested Lunatic House proprietors.

MAY THIS DOCUMENT MEET THE EYE OF SOME HUMANE, DISINTERESTED MEMBERS OF OUR LEGISLATURE, AND SHOULD A COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY INTO THE WHOLE OF THIS WRETCHED SYSTEM BE ORDERED, SUCH EVIDENCE OF OTHER CASES SHALL BE ADDUCED AS MUST SHOCK THE EARS OF HUMANITY. The preceding inquiries of Committees of the House of Commons had reference chiefly, if not entirely to pauper lunatics. Let an inquiry be made into the whole system connected with Chancery Patients. It will be found that persons labouring under predisposition to mental derangement, have that predisposition acted upon by the atmosphere of Lunatic Asylums—mental derangement takes place—the victim is subjected to a commission of Lunatico Inquirendo (as my brother was at the expiration of three years); a portion of their

* A lady residing in this Island has since the former account of this treatise, informed me that her son dined in company with A—— B——, walked home with him, and never discovered his mental disease.

property is then allowed for the maintenance of the individual who is thus declared a Lunatic ; and the remainder frequently enjoyed by his brother, sister, or brothers in law, or more distant relations, in common with a member of the legal profession. How many a female is thus confined by her husband : her feelings first sufficiently worked upon to justify Medical Men in giving a certificate : she is then removed to a Lunatic Asylum, and there the thing is settled for ever ; the excitement of an Asylum, is usually sufficient to upset the nervous system to the entire satisfaction even of an honest Jury. What a farce is the visitation of Magistrates to Lunatic Asylums to discover abuses ! ! ! * Nothing would have been more easy than to make an arrangement by which an income of several hundreds a year belonging to A—— B—— and L—— P——, would have been appropriated for an accumulating capital to revert to their brother and sisters children, and nothing appeared more difficult than for the Solicitors to prevent it ; nor have they altogether succeeded, for the Master (Brougham) only has allowed a portion of L——p's income for his maintenance.

It will be found that the legal profession grasp as their portion of the spoil at least twenty per cent of the property of Chancery patients. The amount of the bills of that highly distinguished firm Messrs. V—— and L—— and the other Solicitors, in merely changing the names of the Committees of L—— P—— to which there was opposition before the master, and for

* Mrs. H——n of P—— was confined five years ago at ——, and since recovered.

Miss E—— sister of General Sir T—— E——.

Miss M——n daughter of Capt. M—— of the M——s ; the brother was a librarian to a public Institution.

Miss Anna Maria M——h, her brother-in-law told me she came out with her feet in the most neglected state. She had been confined 16 years.

All these were removed in decided opposition to the advice and declarations of the Lunatic house proprietors in which they were confined.

that of A—— B——, where there was none, were as follows :—

Taxed costs on the appointment of new Committees occasioned by the death of one individual in the former ones.

In that of the appointment of L——— P——s Committee, where considerable litigation before the Master took place, the Taxed costs are as follows :—

Messrs. V——d and L——n.....	£147	19	8	}	£188	12	10
	40	13	2	}			
Mr. B——s for Mrs. G——....	£56	19	2½	}	69	3	2½
	12	4	0	}			
Mr. D——e for Mrs. D—— H——	£83	10	9½	}	92	15	9½
	9	5	0	}			
					£350	11	10

In the appointment of A——— B——s Committee where no litigation took place the Solicitor's expences were

Messrs. V——d and L——n....	£87	7	0	}	£139	11	11
	52	4	11	}			
Mr. B——s.....	£17	4	11	}	30	6	5
	13	1	6	}			
Mr. D——e.....	£10	12	3	}	25	5	0
	14	12	9	}			
					£195	3	4

As the Masters have not questioned the propriety of these charges which are “taxed costs,” it must be inferred there is nothing in them beyond the common rule, and I adduce them as being considered particularly moderate.

Sherford states—“It appears by the return made in “1830, by the Secretary of Lunatics to the Lord Chancellor of Lunatic petitions, which had been decided by “the Lord Chancellors for the time being, in each year, “during the last six years, that the numbers from the “1st of May to the 30th of April, in the following “years, were as follows, viz.—

From 1824 to 1825.....	291
“ 1825 to 1826.....	344
“ 1826 to 1827.....	428
“ 1827 to 1828.....	403
“ 1828 to 1829.....	463
“ 1829 to 1830.....	483

“and by a more recent return, printed 3d July, 1832,
 “that 386 Lunatics *only* were at that time confined un-
 “der the authority of the Lord Chancellor—the num-
 “ber of other persons in England and Wales, who are
 “in confinement as Lunatics, is probably not accurately
 “ascertained. Sir A. Halliday, in 1829, stated that the
 “number returned by the clerks of the peace, of the
 “several counties, exceeded a total of 16,220;” the
 legal profession therefore might have just grounds of
 complaint, at property so immense as that belonging to
 those afflicted individuals being divided by others, and
 not coming within the jaws of the Court of Chancery;
 did not the income of these 386 unhappy individuals
 display an amount, from which the legal profession can
 fish up a sum adequate to the most unsatiable appetites,
 without risking being choaked by the indignation of pub-
 lic opinion, which it certainly would be, was their prey
 from more diversified lunatic cases. The returns ordered
 to be printed is as follows:—

109	Lunatics whose property amounts to less than £200 per annum, total	£	s.	d.
	annual amount of such property...	11,210	14	3
234	Lunatics whose property amounts to £200 per annum and upwards, total			
	annual amount of such property....	264,464	14	7
43	Of whose property there are no — returns.			
386		£275,675	8	10

Of this money five per cent is annually paid to the
 court of chancery, about five per cent to the legal pro-
 fession for passing the annual accounts, exclusive of the
 expenses of the Lunatico Inquirendo, which on these 386
 individuals may have averaged a thousand pounds each,
 that is £386,000 to the legal profession, and when this is
 added to the casualties of changing the names of the
 Committees—renewal of leases, &c. &c.!! what fine
 pickings these gentlemen have.

Next come the medical men, and their fees for giving
 evidence before a jury as to the insanity of a patient,
 and the advantages of doing so, connected with the ne-
 cessary previous attendances, are enormous. But theirs is
 as nothing compared with the vast receipts of proprie-
 tors of lunatic asylums. Many of the asylums average
 upwards of a hundred patients at a time, whose relations pay
 from one to four hundred pounds a year for their keep!
 —can any one then be surprised at the extract from Mr.

Pinel's statement in page 9. Both proprietors of the asylums in which my afflicted brothers were confined threatened me with prosecution—(this is usually the case on surmises of disapprobation)—and it is not every one who has a surplus income to meet such expences, or willing to compete single-handed in a Court of law against their colossal fortunes. It is these causes which impress silence with a force equal to the seal of the Spanish inquisition.

Furthermore it may be proved a very large proportion of the committees of the victims, disburse *only a portion of the incomes upon the patients: retaining the remainder for their private use* exclusive of five per cent allowed for collecting the income. If a committee are to have a remuneration and that they should have the option of something, I begin to be convinced, it ought to be fixed, and the accounts of the other expenditure] audited by authorised and disinterested auditors. In the Court of Chancery where facts are so dressed up in the garb of fancy that evidence of the truth is too seldom obtained; it is true there is a form of passing annually the committees accounts, but how is it done? no account is required of the expenditure of the allowance made to a committee for a supposed lunatic's support, and in our schedule the solicitor and committee had merely to insert, "received by committees for care and "maintenance of supposed lunatic £550." Is this justice—is this protection to our afflicted countrymen?

But what can be more improper than that any solicitor, or medical man, who was concerned in, or adduced evidence in a commission of lunacy, should be one of that committee: or afterwards have the patient given over to his care; as has been the case of my brother. A return of the numbers of attorneys who are joint committees to chancery lunatic patients will perhaps be called for when the subject is publicly gone into, and Mr. B—— the executors solicitor, declined the appointment of being joint committee to A—— B—— and L—— P—— from a sense of the impropriety of it.

It has been questioned how far it is desirable for the nearest relatives to be appointed the Committee, but if they are likely to look to self interest, surely strangers are still more liable, and although I once thought differently, yet I find from records in Chancery Practice, experience has proved that of the two evils, it is safer to trust to relatives—but why should entire reliance be

placed in either? Why give over the cure of persons and the care of their property ENTIRELY to any one deeply interested in preventing the marriage or recovery of an invalid. Government physicians, at fixed stipends, should, (not as now,) visit these patients only once a year, merely to see if they seem comfortable, but should controul the whole treatment, and report upon the cases to a medical board, as in the naval service, leaving to the relatives the selection of the practitioner.

The property of 368 Chancery patients evinces an income of nearly £400,000 a year, and when it is remembered that there are besides upwards of 16,000 helpless individuals who are dispersed in lunatic asylums and whose property is arrested from them and possessed by others, without even the mockery of an inquiry ; does it not adduce a conviction that there should be a Judge and Court for their safeguard, and the expenses of which might be most amply remunerated out of the savings arising from the correction in the errors of the present system. I am no legislator, all I can pretend to do is to point out the abuse and the means of detecting this crying oppression, to which, in comparison the sufferings in the Spanish Inquisition, are as nothing. I have visited a Jail, I have also an acquaintance with the horrors of the interior of a lunatic asylum ; and solemnly declare there is not room for the shadow of a comparison. Englishmen, Countrymen and Friends, I implore you to remember I am exposing abuses of a magnitude to call down the vengeance of the Almighty upon our community!!! Nations and Empires rise and fall in proportion as they are virtuous, and unless our legislature does take up this subject, it must be one of the causes for which it will be liable to be removed, like the chaff which the wind scattereth away from the face of the earth—"for the Lord knoweth the ways of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish."

